

For Mr. Heymore with Mr. Tourys Com^{rs}

OCCASIONAL

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LETTERS

UPON

TAXATION;

UPON THE MEANS OF

RAISING THE SUPPLIES WITHIN THE YEAR,
TO ANSWER THE EXPENCES OF A NECESSARY WAR;

AND UPON SUCH

MEASURES as would PROBABLY TEND TO SECURE GREAT-
BRITAIN and its NATURAL DEPENDENCIES the BLESSINGS
of PEACE upon a DURABLE SYSTEM.

By An INDEPENDENT MAN.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.

MDCCLXXX.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE LETTERS contained in this collection have already appeared in an EVENING PAPER separately, without seeming to have excited censure (except in one instance, which, as will be seen, was noticed in the next Paper without being replied to). This has induced the Author to publish them in the following form, with very little alteration in the composition. They will be found to contain some opinions entirely his own, particularly those respecting contributions from the Stocks, which, being founded on *rational grounds of assurance against risk*, upon principles of equity and œconomy, and being joined with others which are all so calculated as not to interrupt the current by which riches flow, it is hoped they will appear as little liable to exception as any hitherto offered.

The other matters he speaks of are of the first magnitude ; in treating of which he is far from *daring to decide* what is *best* to be done. His early years being spent in America, where he was many years employed as an Officer in the Navy, of course gives him
some,

some advantages over the generality of his fellow-subjects; and if what he has presumed to say upon the modes of conciliation with that Country, and upon naval subjects, only furnish *one single hint* which may be wrought to public benefit, he will have a *sufficient equivalent* for all that pain he experiences in obtruding his *indigested thoughts* in so *homely a dress*.

His object is truly no other than to promote *national security* and *permanent peace*; which to him seems irreconcilable with our retention of so *many* remote, and several of them burthensome, or unproductive territories, bordering upon the dominions of other powerful States; or holding it as a State maxim, That the Colonies and our Sister Island ought to be subject to our Parliament, especially when it cannot be made appear to be either to their interest, or to that of the community at large, that such a system should continue to exist for the future.

* * It is necessary to premise, that Letter I. was not published till March 2; and the Reader is desired to observe, that Mr. EDEN's Plan * for an additional Land-Tax is the same as that proposed in Letter XVII. inserted in the WHITEHALL EVENING-POST of August 5.

* In his *Four Letters to Lord Carlisle*, page 168.

OCCASIONAL



OCCASIONAL LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

The following Letter was presented to the Minister upon the day it is dated, and is with extreme diffidence exposed to public attention. It however claims regard, because it may give confidence to those that think we are on the brink of Bankruptcy; as the Author endeavours to shew the Stockholder, the Landed Men, and Men of every description, that if the Taxes are not allowed to accumulate upon the necessities of life so as to cramp trade, without immediately affecting their annual income to any considerable amount, Government may be enabled to defend their *rights* for many successive years, or indeed for ever; while upon the principle which actuates a Merchant that insures his property when at risk, they will lend their aid by subscribing a part to secure the remainder; and money will never be wanting, as the public expences will be ever circulating, and there will be always Buyers of the contributive share mentioned to be given by the Stockholder, as well as People ready and willing to buy the Anticipations of *un-appropriated Revenue*, as the income would be perfectly secure, and the value exactly calculated, by reason it would be little liable to fluctuation. Property being the only object of Taxation, the more simple the mode of coming at it, the less it will cost Government to levy; and the taxing *necessaries of life* beyond what *Trade* will bear, would be as bad policy, as for a Landlord to rack his Tenants so as to make them leave their Farms. And such would be the case with our Manufacturers; if the means of subsistence is disproportioned to their wages, or the prices their commodities will produce, they *must* and *will quit* the Country, or become chargeable to the Parishes.

To the RT. HON. LORD NORTH.

MY LORD,

I TAKE the liberty to suppose the time arrived when we can no longer extend Taxation upon articles of general consumption, for

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fear

fear of affecting our Manufacturers in such a manner, as to make it impossible for them to supply Foreign Markets upon so low terms as their Rivals in Trade of other Nations, and when a further extension of Taxes upon Luxury would occasion People of Fortune to seek a Country where they could enjoy the elegancies of life at an easier rate than at home. At such a time, the Creditors of Government would fear, lest the Taxes appropriated to pay them their interest, would fail to produce a sufficient amount; and if we should then be engaged in a war, they would likewise fear, that for want of resources Government would be under a necessity of taking great liberties with their property, or otherwise be in danger of being subverted and overthrown, and their *whole property* in that case *lost* (no species of property so much depending upon the maintenance of the present Government as that which is invested in the Funds). At such a time, they would most probably wish to find themselves in a situation to be able to act for themselves, and *give* their assistance to Government.

To prepare for so critical a period (which all men agree must sooner or later arrive), I would propose the Proprietors of the Funds should be recommended to form a Committee, or Representative Body, by ballot or otherwise; which Body should be empowered by Parliament to do what they judged necessary for the support of Government, upon which their *whole property* depends. The interests of the National Creditors (Foreigners as well as Natives) being seen to be so interwoven with those of the State, and the Nation in the situation I have supposed (that

we could not proceed one step further in taxing either the Luxuries or Necessaries of Life), would it not be for the *interest* of the Stockholders, to *propose* to remit to Government one or two per cent. of their several capitals, probably annexing *conditions* respecting contributions from *landed and all other property*?—A grant of two per cent. would produce more than two millions and a half, at the present price of Stocks, and each individual would only feel a diminution of a 50th part of his income. The contribution being *given*, Public Faith would be *no way violated*; the dread of a total loss (which I presume is the cause of the present very low price of Stocks) would be removed; the contribution would be continually circulating, and every one partaking by himself or his connections; People would feel the effect *gradually*; Foreigners concerned in our Funds would be necessitated to contribute, and thereby much money retained that would otherwise go abroad; People's incomes would be taxed in proportion to the *receipt*; and if a mode of raising all future supplies had the same * *object*, articles of Luxury and the Necessaries of Life *need* not be further taxed, which would remove the motive for People of Fortune, as well as Manufacturers, quitting this Country; and the money owing from Government being still the same (only the contributive part having changed hands), the

* I mean, if people's annual incomes were in general taxed upon *receiving*, as is the case in the Land-Tax. And it is worthy consideration, that by taxing Money in the receipt (its annual produce), all who have property here, and reside abroad, would be made to contribute towards its security and defence.

National Debt (strange as it may seem) would remain one *constant resource* (to be applied to in war and *public commotions* only) never to be increased (in the funding way), nor ever extinguished. As by my plan, the Stockholder gives a part of his *principal*, so ought every *Trading* and insuring *Company*. Money invested in *Mortgages* ought to contribute, and the Land (or property upon which it is secured) ought to be eased in proportion. The Landed Property would then be more *equally taxed* than at present; and instead of funding, people might be invited to supply Government by *purchasing exemption from Land-Tax* for a certain number of years, and by *anticipating* the *un-appropriated Taxes*. In answer to a Friend's question, How will Foreigners agree to the disposal of their Property?—I say, they would be only in the same state as the foreign Proprietors of India or Bank Stock, who are bound by the acts of their Directors. The declared purpose of the measure recommended, must be to *support* the Credit of the Stock. The Committee's business is to watch its *Interests*, and to conduct themselves by prudential considerations only. They will be ready to adopt any measure to *quiet* the minds of the Proprietors; and it is *presumed* that Stocks will rather rise than fall, when it is seen that a well-concerted plan is about to be adopted, which will connect the Landed with the Monied Interest, and *blend* them so together, that they will make a common cause, and will be *equally secure*; and that Government must for ever have resources by calling upon *Property* only to defend *itself*. These measures would be extremely *popular* too, as the Minister might declare the

common

common People should never feel *any further im-*
positions upon articles they consume.

By the advice of a small circle of Independent Men, I offer the above to your Lordship's consideration, and

Have the honour to be, &c.

Windsor, Dec. 17, 1778. * * *

P. S. I have said what two per cent. would probably produce; but the Committee would assuredly contribute according to the *exigency*, and according to what other property contributed; and I set out with presuming, they would see the impolicy of a further extension of Taxes which *affect Trade*, and thereby reduce the produce of *those Taxes* appropriated to pay *them their Interest*, especially at a time when Government would be unable to give them redress or assistance. Raising supplies by my method would let *the People see what the war really costs them*. Had this been the case in former wars, we should not have pursued them with a view to extend or add to our Territory beyond the Atlantic, at the expence of a Mortgage of our Property here. But having attained the *original object*, we should have confined our views to the destruction of the Enemy's Trade, by which they would have been sufficiently humbled, and our Country rather enriched than impoverished, as a Naval War might be easily supported without further Funding.

In illustration of the plan above-mentioned, let us suppose, that *A* being possessed of 100*l*. Stock, is willing to remit two per cent. of his capital, which *B* supplies; so that *A* will receive interest of 98, and *B* of 2. In such case, and was the war to continue 15 years more, *A* would
still

still possess 60 per cent. of his capital, which is as much as his Stock would sell for now; whereas, if some *effectual* and *great* Plan is not struck out, Government, in the present mode of borrowing, would, after a war of but few years, with accumulating burthens and progressive premiums, be totally at a stand; in which case, it *must take* from Individuals at discretion, or the whole fabrick of the State *fall*, and become a prey to the common Enemy.

LETTER

LETTER II.

March 23, 1779.

I WILL not arrogate to myself any merit from my Letter which you published *March 2*, upon the future mode and objects of Taxation, notwithstanding it has *not* been replied to, and on that account, I may conclude it contained nothing very contrary to general opinion. My intention was to shew the Resources of this Country to be *sufficient at all times*, when Property in the most *direct* way should be called upon in aid of Government in such a manner, as not to *cramp* Industry, nor make it the interest of People of *any* degree to *emigrate*. I hope it has had some effect in preventing despondency. The Stocks have risen in their value since that time; but I will not be vain enough to suppose from any confidence my Letter may have given. Yet, as I know some individuals who have really been *more* satisfied than they were previous to that Publication (and acknowledge it to be the cause), I may conclude it has had the like effect upon *some* others. Upon that account, I wish some more able Pen would undertake to shew in what manner *Property in general* could be taxed so, as that *not only* the Necessaries of Life, but the *Luxuries* likewise, should undergo no further Taxation; for it must be considered, that the *Luxuries of the Rich give the means of subsistence to the industrious Mechanic and Manufacturer*. The views of Government should therefore be confined to the means of meeting *Property* with a Tax, in whatever way it may be invested.

To

To illustrate this, let us suppose a means adopted which would bring *Annual Incomes into view*, and that then Government should demand a proportionable sum from every one towards the exigencies of the State.

A person possessed of 100l. 3 per cents. value 60, *giving*, according to my Plan, 2 per cent. or the 50th part of his capital for ever, which is equal to 1l. 4s. although he *feels* but the loss of the *Interest* of that sum in his *annual* income, viz. 1s. 2½d. yet he has been a means of furnishing Government with more than three millions Stock, supposing the National Debt 150 millions. This mode of Stockholders *giving* their property would make people shy of purchasing Stock, if those who had money in hand to dispose of did not find that, turn their thoughts which way they would, Government had taken care to meet them with a *proportionable* Tax. To do which, till a better mode is pointed out, allow me to mention (another Plan differing from my former, in which there would be no occasion for anticipating the unappropriated Revenue) that of *all* receipts for net *annual* proceeds of Money, Houses, Land, Employments, &c. being obliged to be given upon Stamp Paper, of a value proportioned to the amount, or otherwise not to be valid* (Property, however, to be taxed

* By this means people would not have it in their power to evade the Tax, as they would put themselves in the power of their Tenants, &c. and would be liable to the penal consequences, which might be made for forfeiture of Leases, &c.

The Writer observes, that the bare intimation of the Supplies being (probably) in future to be raised within the year, which was thrown out by the Minister upon opening the

taxed but *once*; in cases of mortgage, &c. the Mortgagee, Annuitant, or other incumbrances, to remit to the Mortgager proportionable to the sum lent). In such case, the Monied Man would have better reason to prefer the Stocks than he has at present, as he would see they were *secure* from a *certainly* of *National Resources*, and that they were *no more* affected than Property in general; he would therefore not hesitate to invest his Money (if he could) in that part of the Stock which would come to market every year that the Stockholders were called upon. And as the sum (*given by them*) to be disposed of would be small, in proportion to what is *now* funded every year, the Stocks in general would certainly rise, the good effects before pointed out would likewise (it is humbly presumed) be attained, the raising the Supplies within the year accomplished, and the causes of the emigration of the people removed in a *degree*, as the *Necessaries of Life* would not require to be further taxed, and the Rich would not have the Elegancies of Life cheaper any where than at home.

the Budget*, had the effect of raising the Omnium to a great height, *before* the India news; *perhaps*, upon considering that in future the Monied Men would not have the same Market the Government *now* opens for them every year it is necessitated to borrow: for if the Funding be at an end, they will be obliged to purchase *Old Stock*; and should that not be taxed in some mode, it will be more valuable than any other Property, as all other kinds must undergo the more *severe Taxation*; and there can be *no reason* why any should be exempt, as All is equally defended.

* "Lord North, in the course of his reasoning upon opening the Budget, for the first time glanced at a mode of raising the Supplies within the year, without having recourse to Funding and Borrowing, which he seemed to think could not continue for ever."

Vide *Gentleman's Magazine* for Sept. 1779.

LETTER III.

April 6, 1779.

TO what I have said in my former Letters let me add, that the modes of Taxation hitherto adopted have always had in view the *stealing* upon the Public in such a manner as to be but little attended to, being generally a light Tax upon this article, then upon another, and so on, until every Individual now pays to an enormous amount. People have not considered that they were every year *rendering their income less and less equal to their expences*, and that the encrease of the National Debt ought to be considered *a mortgage of more and more of their Property*; it being the same thing whether they pay 5 per cent. more upon the articles they must necessarily consume, or receive 5 per cent. less from their Estates, their Money, or their Employments.

But People are desired to take this into *particular* consideration, and they will *then* perceive, that were my Mode to be adopted, a less sum would suffice Government, as people could furnish their *quota at an easier rate individually* than collectively.—Supposing people were obliged to borrow or mortgage for that purpose, they cannot be obliged to pay *more than 5 per cent. per ann.* And as Government would have *done borrowing* upon account of the Public, there would be money enough in circulation to be lent on private security; and this would bring out money from all parts, which now is locked up in small sums in private hands. People *seeing* the object of their security, as in the case of Mortgages, more readily would lend than they now are willing to do

do upon National Credit (witness the high premium Government gives, while a great deal of money is lent out at 4 per cent. upon real security). But the best effect of all would be, that the Nation would not be deceived into a notion that they were *enriching* themselves by a prosperous war, when in fact they are conquering Islands that must return to the original Possessors, and, *if not*, from whence no Revenue can ever be drawn. In the present instance, the Inhabitants of St. Lucie *gain* by their change of Masters, and are become Rivals to the People of our own Islands, in that they will be able to send their Commodities to Market at an easier rate of Insurance than before they were taken, will have the same Markets as our own People, and all the advantage will center in France.

I do not mean, however, to depreciate the merit of the Conquerors. Their conduct is *above* all praise! But my Plans only extend to (the destruction of the *Navy of France*) the *defence* of our present Possessions, and the recovery of *our former Friends upon terms of perfect equality*. I would have *no* preference annexed to a native of Britain. An American-Briton should feel himself equal in every respect. *What merit* does a man derive *from the latitude or longitude in which he happens to be born?* And I am confident if our Rulers were even now to adopt that mode of speaking, we should engage the majority of that Country in our favour. I would have the terms *Dependence* and *Independence* never used upon the occasion. The *preliminary* should be, that all future laws should have *equality* as their primary object, where the joint or separate interests came in question, And let Commissaries or Committees,

delegated by each Country, settle all differences; in the mean time, a general cessation of arms with America, upon *solemn promise* that the *Preliminary Article* will be the *Bounds* of either's demands.

In this case, and when all was subsided, and a solid Union taken place, I should be pleased to see his Majesty confer Honours upon those who have stood forward to acquire their Countrymen the distinguished appellation of *Free American-Britons*. This would cement our Union, and bring us into temper with each other.

As to their Debts, it is part of the Price of their Freedom; they may settle them among themselves, as we must ours; theirs will chiefly fall upon our Neighbours over the Water, who may get paid as they *can*—we shall hardly assist them in the recovery. America grown to *maturity*, we associate with in future under the same King; and supposing that Ages to come it may become the Seat of the Sovereign, what will our Children have reason to regret, as they will have had their choice where to reside?—And as the Soil, Climate, and Advantages, may be in its favour, shall we *now* contend where the Seat of Government shall be in future Ages?

L E T T E R

LETTER IV.

April 27, 1779.

I BEG leave to dilate a little upon what I advanced in my last, where I said the words "Dependence" and "Independence" ought to be entirely dropt relative to America, and "Equality" substituted. I ventured likewise to say, "Were our RULERS even now to adopt that language, we should engage the majority of that Country in our favour." — In saying so, I speak not at random; and as I trust it is all the People of either Country wish, and the Sovereign can desire, I yet hope to see it take effect very suddenly. It surely will appear to every one to be the interest of both Countries to be leagued together under one Sovereign, each People retaining their distinct Rights, and neither, as a People, subordinate to the other. — Cicero says in his Epistles, " * In every new Alliance it must be considered, what are the first steps to be made, and by what recommendation the passage is to be opened to Friendship." In this case, let us freely and without reserve declare, that an American-Briton is, and ought to be, as free as a Native Briton; that this Country is ready to shake hands upon terms of PERFECT EQUALITY. There yet subsists so natural an affinity between us, that I do not fear but, notwithstanding what has passed, America will believe us sincere, and most heartily

* Cicero Ep. ad Fam. 13, 10.

accept

accept the proposal. We already have gone as far in FACT by the Proposals made to them by our Commissioners, only that we have not yet thought proper to speak out explicitly. There wanted the preliminary declaration, " You shall be free and equal, and not subject to Great Britain as a People, but make part of the Empire, and we will be associated together for mutual benefit." Americans and Britons served together last war; we then fought and conquered together, and were perfectly friendly as individuals; even then the People FELT the subordination they were under to this Country*: and I assure you, the thinking men among them foretold the struggles that would happen for equality; and they did not despair but it would be brought about without the dreadful consequences that have happened, as they hoped the justice and EXPEDIENCY of the measure would operate to effect, and they thought this Country would not venture to risk a total separation.— Union and Equality be now the terms proposed; America will then soon dissolve her connection

• The Author is a proof in his own person, that the Americans RESISTED the idea of subjection to our LAWS even before LAST WAR; the Merchants of Boston having employed two of their ablest Lawyers (Otis and Kent) to defend the Captain and Crew of a sloop that resisted a boat sent from a man of war (the Vulture sloop) in which he was sent to examine the vessel for contraband goods; and notwithstanding the vessel was found to have such goods on board, and was condemned as an illicit Trader with the Indians, and in resisting killed two of the Crew, and wounded several; yet, by management, the murder was deemed Manslaughter by the Jury that decided upon it at Halifax; notwithstanding the Inhabitants of Halifax, since its first establishment, have ever subsisted on the Bounty of Great Britain.

with

with France, upon a principle of prudence; the People will not bear to be shackled with Treaties that hinder them from embracing their Countrymen, NEAR RELATIONS, and old Friends; Commerce will regain its former channel; they will dread the consequence of aggrandizing France upon the ruin of this Country, as in the end they would be involved in our fate; and Peace would very soon follow their acceding to the Terms offered; or if not having them on our side, we should have nothing to fear.

LETTER V.

The Pamphlet alluded to in the following Letter, speaks of the Letter to Lord North of the 17th of December, in the following terms:

“ A Letter to Lord North has appeared in the Evening Papers, which seems worthy of notice.”

He afterwards says, “ The Writer appears to have hit upon a Plan which, under some well-concerted Regulations, we could wish to see carried into execution.”

After which he gives the Letter as it was published, and concludes: “ Thus ends this Writer’s Letter. It is left to the judgment of others, whether to adopt his method of letting the Debt remain as it is; or ours, of wiping out to a certain amount; or, whether either will be regarded.”

May 13, 1779.

I HAVE just cast my eye over the publication called, *Observations on the National Debt*, &c. printed for Mess. DILLY, and am happy to find my Letter to Lord North of the 17th December last meets the Author’s approbation,

bation, especially as I conceive him to be what he styles himself, *A sincere Well-wisher of his Country*; and that with as humble an opinion of his abilities (and I hope and believe with as pure a design as myself) he nevertheless ventures to submit his opinions to the Public. As he takes no notice of my subsequent Letters, I presume his publication was made prior to their appearance; but having left my Address with his Publishers, I hope to be favoured with his sentiments (in a private correspondence) upon what I have advanced. In the mean time, I desire you will exhibit the following elucidation of my Scheme of *Contribution* (I will not call it *Taxation*).

We must set out with supposing, that Government have fixed a resolution to fund no more Debt, for the reasons I advanced (December 17), or for any other reasons of due weight. Say then that it is made known to the World, that the policy of the State in future will be to call upon all kind of Property to furnish, in the most *equal* manner, a certain proportion to be applied to such purposes as have no other tendency than general safety and security. Let the Proprietors of Stock know, that they now possess a Property which will rise very high in its value, because all the money required will be raised within the year, and consequently the circulation will bring to *their* Market those People who formerly had a share of the New Funds *annually created*.

But they must be told, they are not to expect to enjoy the advantage at the expence of other Property; for that as their Market would fill with Buyers, so as to raise the Funds far above
par,

par, were they not, as well as other Property, to give an aid to Government, so they must of necessity (and they may well afford it) contribute towards the wants of the State. I would pawn my life, that when this is sufficiently known, all people will see that a due proportion being found between the Monied and Landed Interest, that no Persons would be against supplying Government, by a diminution of their income in the *annual proceeds*, such as could be obtained by having Receipts upon Stamps in proportion to the amount, rather than by an increase of Taxes upon consumable Commodities, affecting both Rich and Poor. The simplicity of the Mode of raising the Money recommends itself; and, as I have said, *no* evasion can (with safety to the Parties) take place.

It is Property alone that *can* furnish Money; and who would not rather pay two per cent. on receiving his Rent, Interest, or Annuity, &c. than allow Government to lay 3 per cent. upon what he is obliged to consume, one-third of which necessarily goes to the numerous Receivers, in the form of Salaries, &c. The proportion the Stocks ought to pay would be known after the *first* year by the *effect*; and if when Land paid four shillings, the Stock-holder was to give two per cent. and Government had the Three Million Stock it would produce to dispose of (which would not be a third of what has come to Market in a year), Stocks were yet to rise from the glut of Money at that Market, the contribution ought then to rise to a larger amount:—so that a Man possessed of a given sum, looking every way to lay it out, should be at a difficulty to find any manner of employing

it more beneficial than another. The chief attention then would be to place it where he could have his Dividends most regularly paid. This he would find to be from the Stocks; and this only would occasion them to be sold proportionably dearer than Land, and produce something less than Money lent on Mortgage.

This Mode would prevent the cry of the *many*, who feel *severely* every encrease of Taxes upon the Necessaries of Life, and who, nevertheless, must not be left to perish, as they are the *Pillars* of the State. To make the Fabric lasting, they must have due attention paid them.— Live they must, or the Land will remain uncultivated, and Manufactures cease of course. It will therefore be less felt to lay down your Money at receiving, than pay a higher price for the numerous articles now become Necessaries of Life.

LETTER

L E T T E R VI.

[The following Letter appeared in the *Whitehall Evening-Post*, and is here inserted with the Answer, to shew that the Author is far from desiring to withhold other People's sentiments, and, upon a liberal plan, would rather meet than elude those who differ with him in opinion; the matters he treats of being meant to be rather proposed for *abler Men to discuss*, than insisted upon as Political Dogmas; and this he desires may be understood throughout.]

May 22, 1719.

AS the Scheme of * * * in your Paper wants elucidation, you are desired to insert the following:

The Scheme of * * * to raise money for Government on Stock Property, seems to many to be the most dangerous affair that ever was proposed to the Public. To give a Prime Minister leave to dip his hands in the Stocks, without having something better than a parliamentary check on him, is next to giving your Property away; and to say Ministers shall go so far and no farther, is talking ridiculously. The Scheme must have the sanction of Parliament; and when that is once obtained, who shall stop a venal Majority, who are ready to swallow all they can get, and laugh at the Public? It is matter of great wonder Dr. Price, or some other able Calculator, does not help * * * to perfect *his* Scheme, or expose to the Public the cloven Foot of a Ministerial Tool.

A HONEST ENQUIRER.

L E T T E R VII.

May 25, 1779.

I MAKE no doubt but that the *Honest Enquirer* is a very well-meaning Gentleman ; but I much fear his discernment is by no means equal to his honesty. In the present instance, he has been extremely hasty in drawing a conclusion, without the least attention to the premises. Let him be pleased to recollect, that the offer of the Stockholders (see my Letter of *March 2*) is to be entirely voluntary ; that they are to be Masters of the conditions upon which their contribution is to be given : his objections will then vanish into air.

*** has no right to expect so able an Adversary as Doctor Price (he hopes to have him on his side) ; neither is he the Hireling this Gentleman would insinuate. An *Honest Enquirer* will never fail of doing justice when he has it in his power ; and the Printer of these Letters will satisfy any *Enquirer* (equally unreserved) of the perfect Independency of ***

I think there will remain no doubt of my being of a different complexion from what your late Correspondent conjectures, if he will give this and the following Letters the smallest attention.

L E T T E R

LETTER VIII.

May 25, 1779.

THIS Session of Parliament has plainly evinced the truth of what I presumed to intimate (*Dec. 17*) concerning an approaching Æra in the National resources; and upon considering the mighty efforts to obtain sufficient to pay the *Interest* (only) of the last Loan, it must very plainly appear how necessary it is for some *great* and effectual Plan to be put *en train* suited to that unparalleled expence with which the operations of Government are carried into execution.

It cannot be much longer that such *poor* expedients as we have lately fallen upon, will possibly furnish Interest and Douceurs upon future Loans.

To ensure future supplies, I have proposed equitable contributions from every species of Property, and which can be easily and satisfactorily obtained, if the proposed Committee of Stockholders do but take place. My Plan is *safe*, will always be adequate, and will assuredly have the Multitude in its favour. It will *not* encrease Court-influence, nor create new Offices; it will cease with the necessity that caused it, and leave every man a *certain* income when Peace is restored. And as I have said in former Letters, we shall seek peace and security more than extent of dominion, as we shall not be so likely to be deceived into an opinion as formerly, that while we are pushing the War *beyond* the original object, we are obtaining by conquest what will compensate for our expences, but shall see we are quitting the substance in pursuit of a shadow;
for

for our eyes will be open to what the War really costs us.

At present, like Spendthrifts, we only enquire how much more Interest we have to pay. We now allow Ministers to borrow (for us) at seven per cent. whereas if Individuals were to supply Government with the *gross sum* wanted, in due proportion according to their property, they themselves might be supplied with their proportion at four or five at the most.

If I possess Property, I can borrow (upon it), ought to be liable to pay towards its defence, and need not employ Ministers to borrow for me. If I have none, they ought to have *no* demand, excepting that personal service I owe the Community in which I stand as an individual, and to defend which, upon an equitable call, both rich and poor ought to be, and are liable.

In endeavouring to obviate difficulties in raising money, I have it in view to alter the mode in such a manner as to affect the People of Fortune *only*. They only have, or had, any views in reducing America to submission: The Manufacturer, the Mechanic, and the Husbandman, entertained no hopes of bettering his condition by success in this hopeless measure.

WHY THEN SHOULD THEY FEEL THE EFFECTS BUT FOR A MOMENT?—They all to a man would wish to see the Americans on a level with themselves; and this is all the Americans have desired. Had we but a little while ago adopted this mode of expression, or were we now *unreservedly* and *heartily* to say, “We all agree to admit, that America shall be put upon a perfect level with Great-Britain; we will confine ourselves to this in future negotiations as the *first* principle,

“ *principle*, and we invite them to accede to the
 “ proposal of a *Union*, with sincere assurance of
 “ meeting them half-way ; we will withdraw our
 “ troops, and cease hostilities by sea and land, upon
 “ their solemn promise of associating upon terms
 “ of equality ;”—we should then see the whole
 Country, upon a principle of self-interest, deserting those Leaders who stood out for a Separation, or adhered to the Alliance with France; as it requires no pains to shew them, how much more advantageous it would be to make a part of the British Dominions to be respectable as Members of this Empire, than divided into distinct Provinces, without a mediating power (such as would be the King’s) to reconcile and adjust differences, that would otherwise subsist between them ; and an executive power to enforce the Laws, and conduct the defence of the whole against any Power disposed to interrupt its harmony. I indulge myself with the thought of seeing matters come to an issue in a manner something like the following :

PROPOSALS *from G. B. to agree to a UNION.*

TO begin by offering a cessation of arms, provided the American Congress will renounce their Alliance with France, and appoint Deputies to meet Commissioners appointed by Parliament : the instructions on each side to be, That they enter upon the business of accommodation upon an equal footing, and have regard to the unity of the Empire, under his Majesty, his heirs, and successors. The contest having hitherto been for the rights of the British Parliament, his right of governing the whole upon Revolution Principles has never come into dispute, and consequently

quently not to become a matter of debate. The interposition of Government during the adjustment of differences between the Representatives of each Country, to be avoided: and in whatever way they settle the mode of connection, to have the sanction of the King's approbation. It will become a matter of deliberation, whether the Americans shall be represented in our Parliament or no; and they will naturally demand to share in honours and emoluments, granting their own money, &c. &c. which our Commissioners must be instructed to accede to; and thus disputes might terminate in a solid and lasting union. But if it had only the effect of detaching the Americans from the Alliance with France, and they were no way connected with us but by a compact to unite our interests, and counterbalance that of the House of Bourbon, that termination would ensure us their trade, and bring the most solid advantages, without the necessity of entering into *all* the disputes which will for ever be arising between them and their neighbours, and which has already occasioned so great a part of our National Debt.

This we should be necessitated to do, if they were united with us under one head. In the other case, they could never expect us to make a common cause with them, without their *insuring* to us an indemnification.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

June 16, 1779.

HAVING lately perused the Gazette containing the Abstract of the Act of Parliament to prevent migration, I am now convinced there is but too much reason to presume that the evil I dreaded (and spoke of in my former Letters) has begun to take place: It was, however, *perhaps* impolitic to publish the Restraining Laws at this time, as it may operate to a contrary effect than is intended; for it may *too plainly* shew that there is really better encouragement given by other Nations, and that our Manufacturers are actually migrating in consequence.

This, among other things, may shew us that we are declining very rapidly; and that it will be every day more and more plain, that we are unequal to contend with France and America *united*. To adopt some plan whereby the supplies can be raised without cramping our Manufactures, and to break that yet unnatural connection now existing between our estranged Brethren and their very lately avowed foes, are the only means that can save us from ruin. To effect the former, I have ventured to point out a means of taxing *all property* in its *annual proceeds*, by receipt for rent, interest, and annuities of every kind being upon stamped paper, of a value proportioned to the amount, together with a small contribution to be made by the Stockholders *of themselves*, by their Committee, properly empowered by Parliament.

The next consideration is the detaching America from France, *at any rate*; although the

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concessions on our part be Independency in its fullest extent. People's minds being now prepared for that event, it might, I truly believe, be safely adopted; and the obvious consequences are, that it would operate to revive our connection by *alliance* the most powerful, that of our mutual interests, and Trade might yet recover its former channel. To maintain our own Independency, it seems now absolutely necessary we should acknowledge America so. Let us then no longer pursue the phantom of National superiority over them; otherwise, as our powers decline, our Enemies will encrease; our manufactures will drop for want of a market; the people will migrate to where they can be employed in their several trades; and ruin will overtake us, as the natural effect of not sooner attending to the evident consequences of our unattainable pursuits.

LETTER

LETTER X.

[The following appeared about this time in the *London Evening-Post*.]

To the CREDITORS of the PUBLIC,
NATIVES and FOREIGNERS.

YOU are Proprietors of above one hundred and fifty millions, secured by Law from all Taxes which have been laid, or shall be laid, upon every other species of Property, but subject to more sudden and greater losses from the national distresses, than any other description of men. The fall of two or three per cent. is the common effect of causes which operate no where else. A voluntary subscription of one per cent. may now save you from total ruin. Follow the wise and gloriously-spirited example of the East-India Company; and for this purpose, let each class of Creditors be assembled by public advertisements.

AN OLD PROPRIETOR.

E2 LETTER

L E T T E R X I .

July 3, 1779.

THE *London Evening-Post* having an article (under the signature *An Old Proprietor*) that contains the same proposal as mine for a contribution from the Stockholders, I think it proper to say, that I neither know the Author of that article, nor of the Pamphlet published by Mess. *Dilly* ; and am on that account the more emboldened to express a wish (while the happy union of sentiment continues to appear among all ranks and descriptions of men towards the strengthening the hands of Government), that some Monied Men would step forth and declare their willingness to adopt some such measure as we recommend. The sense of the Stockholders might be easily enough obtained, upon the question for or against the appointment of a Committee, by the question being published in all the Papers in a clear distinct manner ; and the answer, *Yes* or *No*, to appear upon the receipt for the next half-year's Dividend. To prevent any evil impression which may operate to the prejudice of what I propose, I declare I am perfectly independent, and am of too little consideration to add a scruple in the balance of Party : Yet I am not without hope that my feeble efforts may open a way to the discovery

very of National resources, and tend to conciliate the minds of British Subjects on each side of the Atlantic.

P. S. Previous to the taking the sense of the Proprietors by a majority of votes, it might be necessary for the Parliament to vest a certain power in such a Majority so obtained.

LETTER XII.

July 13, 1779.

HAD it been the policy of the State to have covenanted with the Creditors of Government, that they should be liable to Taxation in a degree proportioned to the Land-Tax; fixing that for every shilling in the pound paid by the Land, so much would be expected from the Stocks, and at the same time so much from Money lent on Mortgage, and the Land to be eased in proportion to what it was mortgaged for; in that case, while the balance of Trade with Foreigners was in our favour, and in a war we did not emit more money out of the Kingdom than that balance amounted to (and which I presume in a naval war need not be the case, although carried to the utmost extent), whatever money was in such case demanded for national purposes would continually circulate, would still be within the Nation, and would only change hands: but in whose-soever hands it was,

if it was employed, it would still be contributing towards the expences of that Government which protected it, and our resources would have been infinite. The contrary, however, is the case; and the Parliament not having taken the precaution mentioned, whatever is lent to Government is understood to be free from impositions by Parliament; and if ever it comes to be otherwise, it will be said we have violated our faith with the present Creditors.

The Government having then inconsiderately omitted to make such a Covenant, and matters being now drawn to that period (in Taxation), beyond which we must not dare to proceed much further, we shall therefore soon have to state to our Creditors the danger their Property is in of being entirely extinguished, except they agree to give their assistance: and this I think may be very fairly proved; and if so, the motive of self-interest and security will have sufficient weight to produce the effect I have laboured to recommend.

In my last I said, a question might be stated to the Government Creditors, desiring they would, at the time of receiving their next Dividend, signify their assent or dissent to a Committee of their own body, to act in certain cases for the whole;—the first object of which would be to fall upon the means of discovering and bringing to justice the authors of false rumours, and detecting the other arts of those Basilisks who fascinate the understandings of the uninformed Stockholders, and seize upon their Property as their prey. The second great purpose the Committee might be useful in would be, that of conciliating the minds of their Brethren, in case of
any

any disastrous event really happening. In that case, they might be ready to give such advice as the circumstances might require, and by administering a timely aid to Government, might really secure their whole Property from being extinguished and lost.

To acquire sufficient grounds to act upon in bringing this matter to a bearing; with the utmost diffidence and most hearty desire to be assisted, or set right, if I am proceeding in a wrong course, I beg leave to offer it as my opinion, that a question of the following import be printed on a separate paper, and produced to each Proprietor, or their Attorney, Administrator, Executor, or Assignee, at the time of their signing their Receipt for their Dividend, to which Paper I would have the Clerks desire every person would, according to the powers they might be furnished with (either as Proprietor or Trustee, &c.) give assent or dissent, or signify his acquiescence in the determination obtained by a Majority of those that gave their suffrage. Suppose it to run thus:

" I A. B. Proprietor of (or Attorney, Assignee,
 " Executor, or Administrator of B. C. Proprie-
 " tor of (blank to be filled up with sum, &c.) do
 " hereby signify (blank for *assent*, *dissent*, or
 " *acquiescence in the opinion of a Majority whose*
 " *suffrage shall appear*) on the question, Whether
 " a Committee of Proprietors may, or ought to
 " assemble themselves for the purpose of watch-
 " ing, protecting, and supporting the general
 " interest of all Government Creditors; and who,
 " by furnishing themselves with the best and
 " earliest intelligence, may be able to allay un-
 " grounded fears, as well as propose expedients
 " in

“ in any case whatever, so that in cases of ex-
 “ tremé necessity (should such ever happen) the
 “ numerous body of Stockholders (Foreigners
 “ and Natives) may be assured they have a faith-
 “ ful account of such matters as affect their
 “ concerns. And in order to prevent too nume-
 “ rous a body, which might be productive of
 “ disorder in their meetings, it is my opinion,
 “ none ought to be of such Committee but
 “ who are, and have been possessed of
 “ pounds 3 per cent. per ann. in their own
 “ right, for one whole year, or to a sum equal
 “ in value thereto in some other of the Govern-
 “ ment Funds,

“ Signed _____

“ Witness _____

One great design of this Committee being
 to furnish the Proprietors at large with their
 advice and assistance, until such appointment
 takes place, I beg leave to state to the inferior
 order, that their Property in the Funds is in the
 situation of goods in a ship at sea; and I recom-
 mend it to them to act by the Vessel of the
 State, as prudent Merchants do in cases of risk,
 They do not sell their Property at a reduced
 value, taking 60l. for 100l. but by insuring
 it, they reduce their risk, and so sleep in quiet. In
 such a light we must look upon any contribution to
 Government.—But to make the matter still more
 familiar, suppose a fire to break out next door
 to a house that contained the value of 100l. of
 your Property, would you hesitate to offer twelve
 shillings to such persons as undertook to assist in
 preventing the danger? or would you rather
 accept of a sum much under the value of your
 goods, for another person to stand to the risk?—The

contributing one per cent. of the three per cent. Stock, is only giving what is now worth twelve shillings, and that pays you only $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. interest per annum; yet will furnish to Government a million and a half, and will, by removing the apprehensions of a total loss, raise your Property in all likelihood many pounds per cent. especially if by such contribution, and others proportionable to be got from Property in general, the Supplies come to be raised within the year.

But to elucidate further what I have said of contributions to Government, let us say,

A, represents the Landed Property.

B, the Mercantile Body, whose profits arise from the Balance of Trade with other Nations.

C, the Men who have ready Money.

D, the Creditors of Government, whose Property is merely ideal, and which is more or less valuable according to the stability of the present System of Freedom and Independence. In case of a conquest of this Country, his property vanishes; and if the Balance of Trade becomes against us (through excessive Taxation upon the Necessaries of Life obliging our Commodities to be higher at Foreign Markets than those of other Countries), we shall not *be able* to perform our covenants to him.

E, you may call the Executive Power, who defends, protects, and combines the whole. 'Tis his Power having called upon *A* and *B*, until it appears that to go much further would be destructive of the interest of *D*, as well as of *A*; *B* says to *D*, "We *A*, *B*, and *E*, are mutually bound to perform certain covenants entered into with you, which we fear we cannot in future fully perform. We must state to you, that *A* says

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" he

" he must raise his rents, if *E* should be obliged
 " to call upon him for a further Tax; and *B* says,
 " if his rents are raised, or his workmen's wages
 " increased, he cannot find a Market that will
 " take off his commodities at a price that will
 " allow it; in which case, the source from whence
 " both *A* and *B* derive their power of performing
 " their covenants will be dried up: we therefore
 " recommend it to you to remit to us a small part
 " of what we owe you. *C* is ready to furnish the
 " money if you will assign part of the debt to him,
 " and we will oblige him to contribute from the
 " money he has, or may lend upon mortgage; in
 " which case your property will be secure.

[The Author sent a Copy of the above Letter under cover
 LORD NORTH, and received from Mr. BROWNE, his
 Lordship's Secretary, a Letter with my Lord's Thanks for
 " his zeal and spirit, shewn in his endeavours to be of ser-
 " vice to his Country."

But Mr. B. (speaking in his own person) says, " The
 " difficulties of obtaining the answers which the proposed
 " question makes necessary from the Proprietors of Stock,
 " and the improbability of their acquiescence, made him
 " fear the Plan would not meet with the success which (he
 " was pleased to say) the principles that dictated it de-
 " serves;" but which objections may, perhaps, be obviated
 by the two following Letters."

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

July 24, 1779.

THERE being *no doubt* existing in any Man's mind but that the time is approaching with *hasty strides*, when some other than the ordinary methods must be adopted to raise Supplies, and as Property alone must eventually feel *all the burthen*, no one will say but that every Species ought to contribute. The Creditors of the Public enjoying a property more intimately connected with, and dependent upon, Government than any other, undoubtedly consider themselves deeply interested in its welfare. The fluctuation in its value (according to the news of the day) shews this to demonstration; and all of them whom I converse with, are sensible of the expediency of assisting Government; but being only individuals of a numerous body, they can do nothing of themselves that will be of much account. Indeed, were they, and such as are so disposed, to contribute, it might operate to *prevent* the whole body collectively; and therefore they keep back, hoping for the means of gaining the sense of the majority, and for that majority having a power vested in them to act for the general good.

Should, however, no such Plan take place, and Government, from *urgent* necessity, be *driven* to a more compendious method, which, however alarming, is founded upon a principle of *national* safety—(such as that Law of the Rhodians, by which, in order to lighten a ship in danger by

being a-ground, the crew might *unburthen her of any man's property*, and the loss to be made up by the whole)—the proposed benefit might sanctify almost any measure it should adopt, as a Nation still has power within itself to save itself. It therefore appears *prudent, reasonable, and just*, that the Possessors of all kinds of Property contribute *equally, liberally, and impartially*.

The Parliament's power extending over all Property except the Funds, will regulate respecting the contributions from Land and Money in circulation; but there is a line beyond which if they proceed, it will affect that security which the Stockholders have for the payment of their interest, *which entirely depends upon commerce*; and how near we are arrived at that line, the decline of the duties arising from many of the mortgaged Taxes, the numerous Bankruptcies, and want of confidence in personal securities, too plainly shews.

The Public Creditors viewing their security so circumstanced, and finding their interests so closely combined with those of the State, undoubtedly consider that they would be the greatest losers by allowing things to come to extremity; for as the Necessaries of Life must feel what is imposed on the Land, and Manufactures will feel it next; and as Commerce, when overburthened, must languish, and finally become extinct, so of course the Revenues must fail. Then from *what source* will the Stockholders derive their Interest?

The great Mr. Locke (who is acknowledged to have been one of the first Men this Country ever produced, and who was eminent for his profound reasoning), speaks as follows against
taxing

taxing commodities, which will hold equally against taxing the Stocks (as far as concerns those who reside in this Country, and have a property in them):

“ A Tax (says he) on Land seems hard to the Landholder, because it is visibly so much money out of his pocket, and therefore he is always forward to ease himself by laying it on commodities; but he buys his seeming ease at a dear rate: for though he pays not this Tax immediately, yet he will find a proportionable deficiency in his purse at the year's end, by the increased price of the commodities which are necessary to Life.”

But what *he* has said is *short* of the truth; for as no Tax was ever yet laid on by Government, that the Dealer in that commodity did not *more* than pay himself by imposition on the Consumer; to prevent a repetition of such glaring and open frauds committed by the Venders of taxable articles, let *Property* be in future obliged to furnish the sum wanted in the *directest manner possible*. Let us feel all that may hereafter be demanded in our *receipts*, not in our expenditures. Your Manufactures may then be kept on the present footing, and the Balance of Trade (while the operations of the war are kept within the bounds which our interests ought to prescribe to us) may preponderate against what goes out for warlike stores, hire of foreign troops, and subsidies.

I now remind your Readers, I have proposed a contribution from Stockholders to be imposed by a *Committee of their own Body*, which I am sure may be made good to them by the credit the Funds

Funds will acquire from a Tax at the same time being laid upon money lent on mortgage, and the certainty of supplies equal to the exigencies. And as the Land ought to be eased of a part of the Land-Tax proportioned to the incumbrances upon it by Mortgage, Jointures, Annuities, &c. I would propose a small Tax by the means of all receipts for annual proceeds being upon stamped paper, of a value proportioned to the amount. If the evasion be made *highly penal*, we shall soon find what the Land-Tax, *equally* assessed, would raise; and which (with due consideration of the several circumstances attending the present Possessors) may be so qualified, as to be established without prejudice to any one, either that hold by descent or purchase. Whatever money may be raised upon the credit of the above, let a condition with the Lender be annexed, that in case of other Property being obliged to undergo a further Tax, then a proportionable contribution will be expected from the new Funds. Thus will all Property contribute, and in a war of reasonable extent, only change hands amongst *ourselves*.

P.S. The Author requests his Readers will attentively consider his first Letter (Dec. 17.) to Lord North; and that of July the 13th; and such of them as are Stockholders, are *again* desired to reflect, that a Committee of their Body having confined powers beyond which they *could not go*, would be a *check upon*, as well as a support to, Government. Such check in extremities might prevent a Minister from *violent acts*; and the times having made a large regular Army and numerous Militia necessary, should the burthen

upon the Subject become *intolerable*, the latter being composed of Landholders, and the former at the devotion of the Executive Power, may be brought to support such measures as would extinguish their property entirely.

This argument will have due weight with Foreigners, as well as Residents, and is comprized in these few words—*Necessity may put a period to all compacts*;—and such necessity need not to exist, if you will yourselves consult your true interest, and assist that Government which has and will (while it is able) keep its faith inviolable. And let it not be supposed, that if a majority within the Kingdom agree to this measure, that such as are out of it will be able to counteract their resolutions. Raising the supplies within the year would lay heavy upon Property at the time; but if it ever can be brought about, it will have the most permanent advantages, and would so raise the Stocks (by closing that Market the Government opens every year it is obliged to borrow), as to repay the Stockholders, were they even to agree to go hand in hand by contribution with the Tax upon Land, and what may be laid upon money upon mortgage. No apprehensions would then remain of *National Bankruptcy*;—the Funds would be as safe as Property in Land;—Supplies would be *sure* and *adequate*; and a combination of interests would operate so powerfully, as to dissipate every idea of becoming a conquered Nation. For being populous and united, and having all that is necessary to our defence within the power of purchase from the Balance of Trade, and having a natural barrier that will be a sure defence, while we are true to ourselves—what have we to fear?

It

It may be proper here to remark, that no one has yet undertook publicly to disapprove *the Plans* hinted at, excepting the Person who signs *Honest Enquirer*, and who will appear to have not attended to the principle of equity upon which the Author wishes the proposed contributions or Taxes to take effect.

L E T T E R XIV.

July 31, 1779.

WITH the best arguments and most forcible language I could use, I have laboured to convince the People of Fortune respecting the expediency of liberal and equal contributions towards the support of Government, to be given in proportion to men's property, *not excepting money upon national securities*; by which (if ever the Supplies come to be raised within the year) the Funds will most assuredly keep up to a proportional value with every other property; whereas, should Government be necessitated to borrow, it will have the same effect as over-stocking any market with any other commodity. The consequences which *invariably* follow, need not to be pointed out to a Commercial People, especially if they will consider the funded property as being the *more perishable* the more it is encreased. So far as we have gone, we *have* continued to find a means of paying interest of money borrowed; but for the sake of the property already funded, it would be well if *no further experiments* were tried as to how much further we can go. The

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consternation which such a declaration would occasion, as that the Taxes fell *short* of the sum wanted to pay the *Interest*, and that Government *dared* not to proceed further in taxing, for fear of *encreasing the burden upon Commerce*, can hardly be imagined. But if added to this, you were really labouring under the complicated distress of a foreign enemy in your Country, and an exhausted Treasury, of what value then would that ideal property be, which has nothing for its security but the existence of the present established Government? To avert such consequences, let a Committee of Stockholders be formed, and deliberate for the general welfare. If they offer assistance upon condition the Supplies are in future raised within the year, they will thereby prevent the Stocks from sinking, in consequence of what *must* otherwise come to market every year while the war continues, and which may sink the value of their property gradually, so as to become at length as *worthless as American Paper*; and that without any great disaster, such as the suffering a signal defeat at sea, and an invading army being upon our coasts; for the soundness of which doctrine I need only to appeal to the understandings of the least enlightened part of the Community.

L E T T E R XV.

August 7, 1779.

THE present application for a supply towards the Fund for propagating Christian Knowledge, *seems very ill-timed.* This Country, *groaning under a burden of debt*, one-half of which was brought on by an *ill-judged extension of the last war beyond the original object*, and by *impolitically draining our Country of men and money to promote an extension of American dominion*; by *nourishing the Colonies, and removing the enemy from annoying them*; is now *plunged into a war with the most formidable Powers in Europe*, and *exhausting herself to recover* (de-luded Countrymen!) *only the Shadow of Dominion*; for no other would it be, if we had but that kind of connection with the Americans which they were invited into by our Commissioners.

Let us admit them to participate of *all* the privileges of Britons, or leave them separate and independent; either way we should benefit by them (as they will never adhere to regulations which they either have, or may enter into with any Nation that will cramp their commerce); but never think of reducing them to *a People subordinate to another People.* They have fought to free themselves from that *degradation*; and are too numerous and too distant, and are become formidable beyond what they themselves could have imagined, and never may be reduced to be under the controul of any European Power.— Let us then endeavour to regain them as Allies,

lies, or invite them to associate for mutual defence upon terms of *equality*. They have (since they were in arms) prayed to be considered as Subjects of the same King: this they *may not now* choose. But leave them to themselves, they will soon find it *their interest* to quit their new allies, and *prevent the Omnipotence of the House of Bourbon*.

Leave them to *propagate the Gospel in their own way*; they will do it as effectually as with the aid of *our Hierarchical Powers*. No longer suffer our coin to be drained out of this Country for the purpose of paying and supporting an army in America; it never will return in any shape; and poor as you may think them, they among them who get hold of money, never will quit it while the civil war exists in the heart of their Country. They hide it as fast as it comes to them, and do all the business of traffic through the medium of their paper: so that when Peace returns, you will *find yourselves exhausted of*, and they will be *enriched in, specie*. Not but that their Country suffers in the extreme; and not all they will have hoarded will make up for the devastation of war. This, however, a very few years will restore; and from numerous co-operating causes they *must become a great People*. Cherish, then, the idea of a *combination of Interests*. Related in blood, speaking the same language, of the same religion, and having the same value for Liberty, many of them bred in your schools, wearing your manufactures, and having only *sought to be as free as yourselves*, allow them to be so; they will again *cordially* embrace you, adopt your quarrels, and unite their efforts to yours to stop the progress of *perfidious France and Spain*;

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they will not *assist* them to *crush* the *Parent-State*, which, however it may have inconsiderately acted, never meant to reduce them *below* their former situation : it only wished to consider America still in its *Nonage*, when it was really arrived at *Maturity*. And considering the support and assistance which America has always had from Great-Britain, and that *their own future welfare depends upon our Independence*, it is nothing but reasonable to suppose, that the People would readily come into so politic a proposal as that of *Unity under one Head for defence and offence*, but each *People* distinct as far as concerns their *separate* interests. It is *this* Parliament that has supported the late measures which offend them : call a *new one* ; their Congress and our *new* Parliament may more readily shake hands. Recal your troops for home defence ; leave the rest to the *benign effects of Moderation towards them*. The Tree will probably require to be lopt of some exuberant branches, that the Root may more effectually support the remainder, and produce Fruit with luxuriance.

The pressing necessities of the Times make *speedy expedients* necessary. It may chance that the attention to the saving one Branch may endanger the whole Tree : the Stem may be disproportioned to so great a head ; and there may be *barren or blighted Shoots*, which *exhaust* without bearing any fruit, or such only as are not worth preserving at the risk of the Tree being rooted up by the Tempests.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

August 17, 1779.

IN a well ordered and perfect Scheme of Taxation and Financial Polity, such means would be adopted as should, in the effect, bear equally upon all species of Property. This unhappily has *not* been hitherto sufficiently considered in this Country, and therefore, with other great and momentous concerns, is now more necessary than ever to be duly attended to. To come at Money more easily, Government has hitherto been inattentive to that effect which putting *a great Property beyond its reach* would occasion. The consequence is, that the Stockholder is not affected in his annual income as is the Landholder; but both are equally affected in the articles they consume. But why *all Property* that is protected should not contribute equally towards its defence, is a question unanswerable. While the National Debt was within moderate bounds, people never thought of the mischief an extension of it might occasion, as they still expected a time would come when it would be paid. Now, no such idea possesses any one; and because the difficulties of borrowing increase every day, we fear to do any thing that may add to them; and such it may appear, at *first sight*, would be the effect of calling for assistance from the *present* Creditors of Government. To remove such impression has been my design through my preceding Letters, and to which I will add one argument more, drawn from the *invariable* practice of Merchants.

Consider

Consider then the State of Great Britain as a great commercial Company, whose concerns are under the management of a Select Number (the several Branches of the Legislature). Suppose the Company involved as this Nation is, would not the Creditors of such Company think it their interest to support, not oppress it? Would they not, from motives of policy, encourage its Trade, when visibly on the decline; and rather of *themselves* contribute to its wants, than allow it further to increase its Debts at the hazard of that Commerce upon which alone their security rested? Would not prudence dictate *that* as the *safest* Plan, which would operate to the well-being, rather than the destruction of their Debtors? And would not their minds be easy, when they had placed them beyond the power of being active towards their own ruin, by restraining them in such manner from increasing their Debts, that the *Commerce* of the Company should never be loaded with *further* impositions; and of consequence, be always a sure Fund from whence the interest of their money might be drawn?

What would increasing our Debts be more than such kind of temporary relief a man finds, who, by deceiving himself and his Creditors, obtains money upon interest, after he has raised the prices of his Commodities to the utmost they will sell for, in order to pay the interest of former debts; and now grown desperate, continues to borrow, although he has nothing to promise, but that *if* his Commodities will bear to be further advanced, he will then pay the *interest* duly to *all*; and he resolves to *try*, at the risque of losing his Trade entirely? For what else *can* be done? You who are now his Creditors, *blind*

to your own interests, will not assist him; and driven to use expedients, he must use those that offer. But if you will make a common cause with him, and support him with such means as you have in your power, *his Commerce may yet flourish, and may be extended*: if not, he must submit to suffer with you the loss of *all*. His rivals will undersell him, and both the old Creditors and the new will be on a footing—there will be *nothing left for either!* And such I dread will be the situation of this Country, if we do not call upon Property of *all kinds* to contribute in such manner as to raise the Supplies within the year; for taxing any further the Necessaries of Life, or even such Luxuries as *give bread to our Manufacturers*, will most assuredly endanger the very being of Commerce; and laying *all* upon Land and Money upon Mortgage, will neither be *wise nor equitable*. If these species of Property *could bear it*, it would raise Stocks *above par*; but if, in trying the experiment, the Nation is put in a ferment, and a civil commotion involves us in anarchy and confusion, where then will be their value? It is therefore the interest of the Stockholders to meet and deliberate upon the best means of supporting Government; and they may find their account (whether resident in this Country or not), in liberally remitting a part of their Debt, covenanting, at the same time, that all other Property shall be obliged to contribute equally thereto. If men will be at the trouble fairly to consider, they will be forced to confess, that *equal contributions* ought to arise from *all kinds* of Property: “ for
 “ a Burthen which the whole Body of Subjects
 “ possessed of Property may possibly think easy
 “ and

" and gentle, will, if any considerable number
 " excuse themselves, become *insupportable* upon
 " the rest. Since every man is secured in his
 " *Property* by the care the Commonwealth takes
 " of him, therefore he may be justly Taxed in
 " proportion to his Income." And now, altho'
no one has stood forth to offer any *reasons* why
 the proposed Plan should not take place, and
 no other objections have been made than against
 the probability of persuading Individuals to *give*
 up a *part* of their substance for a problematical
 advantage; yet *I will abandon that idea*, and hope
 to *beget* an enquiry how far it is consistent with
Equity, with *good Policy*, and *general Safety*, to
impose, by the authority of Government, a certain
proportionable Stamp-Duty upon all Receipts for
 Money or Rent, which may be deemed a grow-
 ing income, arising from real or personal Pro-
 perty not employed in the way of Trade, and
 in which may be included the Produce of Money
 in the Funds or other National Securities.

This would remedy the evil that (I observed
 at setting out) now attends the National Debt,
 and *secure* its *permanent* value to the Government
 Creditors. It would be combated, no doubt;
 but would have for its *Advocates* the *whole* of the
People that are not concerned in the Stocks, and
 all that are concerned who *see* its *equity*, and the
general safety that *would arise* from it; and the
 sum that it would produce might be always pro-
 portioned to the wants of the State, and nothing
 like *Bankruptcy* could *happen*—All would con-
 tribute to defend all.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

May 25, 1779.

THE principal objections to an equal Land-Tax are (it is presumed), that the present manner of assessing the Land has been so long in use, every Landholder considers his Estate more or less valuable according to its being less or more rated to the Tax; and having *ever* formed the same opinion, they have ordered their affairs accordingly. (Nay, in case of a proportionable *equal* Land-Tax, some who have great incumbrances upon their Estates, either created by themselves or their predecessors, might be so affected as to have their whole Property swallowed up with payment of Interest, Annuities, Dowers, &c.) And those that have purchased lately will complain, that depending upon their Land being *never* liable beyond the former rate, they had paid much too dear for their Property, as they find the Tax is now to be levied according to the Rack Rent.

In answer to this it may be asked, Whether they have not *always* had *some apprehensions* that this would be the case *at some time or other*? And they may likewise be asked, Whether they had the least doubt of its being adopted, should ever a greater demand be made from the Land than what it now amounts to?

Whatever they answer, I will presume they do really think it *but reasonable*, that all people should pay in future every *further demand* in the proportion to which they are possessed of Property. They will allow we have hitherto pur-

fued a *wrong Plan*, in taxing Land ; but provided we allow them to pay in the present manner up to four shillings in the pound, they surely will not think it wrong that Government, requiring a still further Supply, looks for a *due* proportion between the *Income* and Tax in all they may now think it needful to require.

To explain myself, let us suppose *A* has a Property of 100l. per ann. at this time. Being rated at the *full value*, he pays 20l. per annum.

B has likewise 100l. per annum. He is rated at 50l. and *only* pays 10l.

As *A* can afford to spend only 80l. per ann. and *B* can afford to spend 90l. and as neither ever *expected* a higher Tax, why not then in all future *additional* Taxes upon Land, consider *A* as worth 80l. per ann. and *B* as worth 90l. and require them to pay accordingly, and not *unjustly* continue to load *A* with *double* what you require of *B*?

Let us then suppose Government requires a sum *above* the four shillings in the pound, may it not be *equally* assessed by a Tax upon *Receipts for annual Proceeds*? Thus, *A*'s Tenant brings his Rent, which, when the present Land-Tax is deducted, amounts to 80l. Say that 6d. in the pound is required, let then the Tenant require the Receipt to be given upon a Paper which his Landlord shall produce with a Forty-shilling Stamp taken out from the appointed Office, and *B*'s Tenant requires his Receipt upon a forty-five Shillings Stamp, as his Rent, deducting Land-Tax, is 90l. per annum. By this means, the present Taxes are levied in the *old* manner, but all *additional* Taxes will be equally levied ; whereas, were you to go on in the old manner, *A*'s
Property

Property would be *annihilated*, when *B* might retain a considerable income. At the same time that the above or some such Plan was to take place, if Money lent upon Mortgage was taxed in the *annual proceeds*, and the Land proportionably relieved by the Mortgagee being obliged to remit to the Mortgager a sum proportionable to the sum lent and to the Land-Tax, the Landholders in general would be *eased of a heavy Burthen*, and Land, as well as Stocks, would *rise* in value: for people would be less fond of placing their Money out on Mortgage, and of course there would be *more Buyers of Stock and Land*. And this is what might be proposed to the Stockholders, as an inducement to contribute towards the necessities of the State, and the raising the Supplies within the Year. For every thing that contributes to strengthen the hands of Government, to *take away the necessity of further Borrowing and Funding*, and to burthen other Property, will undoubtedly give confidence and security in, and consequently add value proportionably to, the present Funded Property.

In doing all that I have recommended, no one's real possessions need to be exposed to the knowledge of the Public any more than at present. The Public need fear no evasion, as the Tenant will take care his Receipt is upon a Stamp of a proper value, otherwise it will not be valid; and collusion will not be likely, as it may be made unsafe for the Landlord as well as Tenant. All certain annual Incomes may be affected by this in a degree, according to the amount; and none need fear it will operate to their hurt, as the times must first be such as to make a new Tax

necessary; and if so, it cannot be levied too equally, nor too simply affect Property: for if a Tax is laid upon articles of Luxury, it will promote the smuggling of *Foreign Commodities*; and if upon the Necessaries of Life, Property will (as I have repeatedly said) have a *Vender's Tax* as well as one by Government, and an additional amount to pay Receivers, &c. If I am obliged to pay off an incumbrance upon my Estate, is it not better to meet my Creditor myself, than to pay it with the addition of *poundage, attendance, coach-bire, &c. &c.* to an Agent to do the business for me?

I speak plain language, with an honest intention, and hope I shall be understood, as my motive is to promote national security by means of Taxes the least oppressive.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

August 19, 1779.

I AM glad to find People begin with me to think there is a necessity for great exertions towards raising the Supplies within the year, and observe with pleasure that a Correspondent of yours has recommended a principal part of my Plan *. He *superadds* a Plan of burthening people according to their rank ; which as *Rank itself is a Tax*, when suitably filled, would be particularly oppressive, especially upon men in a military line; the pay being not more than equal to the support of the individual, without any regard to their having families. Those indeed in *high stations*, on *half-pay* (many of whom have no claim from service), ought to be made to contribute *largely* ; and all *sinecure* places, no less than *half* of their amount. But any Tax that would affect commerce in the smallest degree ought to be avoided, as it would prevent the influx of wealth. Every measure that drains the Country of specie ought to be dropt. The American contest has had that effect in a *high degree*. Let us stop the emission of money upon that account. I will not take upon me to say whether we have been wrong or right. The measures we ought now to adopt ought to have the regaining the *friendship* of America at *any rate* as their *chief object*. America will, *must* see *her security* depends upon her making a common

* See Whitehall Evening-Post, Aug. 12, 1779.

cause with us ; and if we are timely in our offers, will secure to us the West-India Islands : whereas, if we wait till they are gone, *adieu to Commerce !—adieu to Funded Property !*—America may lose her independence, and become subject to her arbitrary Allies. We may, after all, continue to be a Nation, but it will be, of Soldiers and Husbandmen ; strong and powerful against *Invaders*, but wanting commerce, and of course deficient in what is necessary to a war of *offence*. We may remain independent and free, but poor, and sunk into an inferior place amongst the Nations of Europe, until other Powers becoming rich, luxurious, and effeminate, may in their turns fall, and we *again* fill the page of History with *our Victories*.

LETTER

See Whittell's Evening Post, Aug. 12, 1779.

cause

LETTER XIX.

August 24, 1779.

A RETROSPECT into the *causes* and *effects* of former Wars since the Revolution, will bring conviction that even the *most successful* have never produced advantages *adequate* to their *cost*. Wisdom ought therefore to point out a means of removing the *cause* of this and future contests, especially as we now have that *load of debt* which would endanger the *life* of the Body Politic either to *remove*, or to be allowed to *increase*. Such is the conduct of the skilful Physician and Surgeon in the natural body, and I believe the analogy will be allowed to hold good throughout what I am about to say. Should I be prolix, I know that, interesting as the subject is, my Letter would not be read: I will therefore only desire People to look back to the causes that produced the two last wars, and the effects our strenuous and *successful* efforts produced, and balance the consequences those wars have *entailed upon us*. The last war was caused by differences happening concerning the limits of ours and the French Colonies. Eventually they lost their Colonies. Our present war is brought on by differences in opinion respecting the powers we were entitled to exert over those Colonies; and whether we were right or wrong, they have emancipated themselves. I speak of our former Colonies: those we *won* from France we *yet* hold a power over. But supposing a peace concluded

concluded this instant, and we continued to hold Canada, Louisiana, and Labrador, should we not retain what would embroil us with the (perhaps) independent American Colonies? In the nature of man the principle is interwoven, that self-interest should govern all his actions. This operates to misguide his judgment as to the line of strict justice. And whatever boundaries might be assigned to each party at a peace, one or other would (in a Country where each were pushing to extend themselves) encroach beyond their proper limits: and this they might do for a time undiscovered (occasioned by the present low state of population and improvement in the Back Settlements), each would be tenacious of what they had thus *stolen*, and a new war would break out, in which we again must side with our Settlements, and a *new drain* be opened to expend our blood and treasure; in the conclusion of which we might be obliged to abandon the Country entirely, or might make one part so *predominant* as to swallow up the other, and *finally* be too strong for us to hold in subjection.

For these reasons I would now *abandon America*, excepting Newfoundland and the adjacent Islands. By this we should have an *indisputable boundary*; for you may trust me, my Countrymen, Canada will cost you more to keep and defend (if our former Colonies retain their independence), than the balance of trade with it will repay. I would emancipate it with the others, and let their warring among themselves give you no uneasiness. *Court Trade with all the Colonies.* She is a *kind Mistress*, and will *incline* to those that are *kind* to her; and will soon get

rid
 concluded

rid of the engagements which she may be under to your *Rival*.

To remove the cause of future wars with Spain, give it back what you obtained in a former war, but at the time set so little value on, as not to thank your Admiral for the conquest of, yet you have held with great expence, and must ever be liable to wars until it returns to the *natural* owner. I say, *natural* owner; because I should think it natural for us to keep the Isle of Wight, and that it would be but natural if any other Power held it for us to do our utmost to recover it. Minorca I would cede to *some* Power for an *equivalent*; and to please France, I would doff that *useless*, *vain*, and *childish* title, which, like a feather in a Lady's cap, subjects her to the danger of losing her whole head-dress. With all these cessions, we could trade as freely in the Mediterranean as the *Russians*, *Swedes*, *Danes*, and *Dutch*; and holding nothing in this hemisphere but *Islands*, we should never dispute about Boundaries, and thus we might *continue in peace for ages*.

If a contrary conduct has no other effect than a *two years war*, with the consequent expence of *at least thirty millions*, and you retain *all you now hold*; Is the possession of an empty title to America (for you would have no other by the terms you offered by your Commissioners), a *more empty title* to the being *King of France*, and the holding a *barren rock* at a great expence for the convenience of annoying a Power with whom you need never be at war, or for a harbour for trading vessels where there are a number of harbours, (some of which in the nature of things will always be neutral) worth what will entail a debt

upon you, to pay the interest of which would require *more than* a further *two shillings* in the pound *upon the land*? But what will you answer when you are told, it is *most likely* these possessions will be *wrested from you*, let you exert yourselves ever so much? Is not then every thing in favour of what I propose, especially when it is extremely doubtful whether after one year we may hold a single Island in the West Indies?

LETTER XX.

August 26, 1779.

IT is *presumed*, that all subjects of the State owe, first, their personal service in its support; next, they owe contribution towards its expences, according to their property; and *even Foreigners* stand in the latter relation to us, let them be of what Nation they will, provided they have possessed themselves of any kind of property in this Kingdom or its dependencies. And as this need not be told them, so when a necessity exists of calling upon them, they will contribute with *as much alacrity* towards the defence of their property, as may be consistent with their personal allegiance elsewhere.

They, as well as our Fellow-subjects, may now be told, that although they have not hitherto as National Creditors been required to furnish

any

any thing out of their Stock or Dividends, yet the time is perhaps very near when the *equity* and *expedience* of such a demand will be made appear. And it may be backed by no less a body than *all the Landholders, all the Manufacturers, all the Husbandmen, all the Day-Labourers,* and all men of their *own body*, who, having duly weighed and considered the matter in every light, can discover no reason why so large a part of the National Stock, become the property of Individuals by either mortgage of private property or of the public revenues, ought not to bear a share in the public burthens; otherwise the time may come when money upon *every security* will be lost, with the *pledges taken for it*.

If I pledge my Land or Goods, I have parted with so much of my property; he that has received the pledge is therefore interested in the thing given in pledge, according to the proportion the money lent bears to the value of the whole. It is the same with regard to the pledge of a part of the public revenues to the Creditors of Government. They are as deeply interested in what concerns their security and their *efficiency*, as a man is who has lent his money upon an estate liable to be broke in upon by the sea breaking down the banks that were raised to keep it from being overflowed. Although no *actual* engagement was entered into that the Mortgagees should contribute towards keeping them up, yet in such case it would be *prudent* in him to see they were kept in repair; and if there appeared an inability in the Mortgager, in that case it would be *expedient* to give him assistance. The consequences of a contrary conduct being

too obvious, I need advance no further arguments to shew how dangerous it will be for the Stockholder to trust entirely to the *chance* of Government being *always* able to raise supplies without *their* assistance. *When the means fail*, and the *Enemy*, like a torrent, has broke in upon us, it will then be too late; or, if Government is *necessitated* to TAKE, rather than wait for what may be the *consequences of delay*, they will then repent of *their tardiness to give*, as they will not any longer know at what value to estimate the remainder.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXI.

September 21, 1779.

BY (only) continuing the *present Taxes*, and high *premiums for Money* supplied to Government, the *Commerce* of this Nation, *without* any other cause, would most assuredly *decline*.—*Encreasing* the former, and continuing the latter, it is *feared*, will, nevertheless, undergo a further trial, and (with our loss of America) will *hasten the extinction of Trade*.

It therefore becomes *every Man* who wishes well to the Community, without *fear* or *reserve*, to *warn* people of the evil consequences which must *inevitably* follow from the driving Government to the *necessity* of *encreasing the National Debt*. There lives not a *single* person who is enlightened with the *feeblest* ray of *rationality*, that does not assent to what I advance. The Landholder sees it, and fears (from a defection of the *present Taxes*) Government will impose an additional Land-Tax. The Stockholder fears a stop will be put to the receipt of his dividend. The Monied Men fear it; and, from the same cause, dread to invest their money in either Land or Stock; and observing the *Bankrupt List of Traders*, are not willing to venture it on private security. The consequence is, they are *allured* by the offers Government is *obliged* to make them, and help forward the *ruin of their Country*, and *encrease* their own *risk* by accepting *douceurs*, which operate to *keep up* the rate of Interest, to *increase* the Public Debts,

and

and at the same time that it creates the necessity of Taxes, it helps to dry up that Source from whence Taxes flow. For the Trader cannot get money upon so easy terms as formerly, and the several articles he consumes are raised in their price by additional Taxes; so that he must be content with less profit, or carry his goods to market with the risk of meeting goods of the *same quality* from other Nations ready to be sold at an *under-rate*. But rather than run such a venture, he gives the matter up, discharges his workmen, and they migrate: and thus the several branches of the Stream from whence the National Wealth and the Government Resources flow, may be dried up in this Country, but, in the nature of Springs, break out in some *other*, and continue to flow towards the aid of that Government, as they used to do towards ours.

By the Plans I have in my former Letters proposed, no *Merchant, Tradesman, or Labourer*, as *such*, will suffer: the only sufferers (if such we may call them, who are by contributing a part of their Property securing the remainder) will be *Men of Property, Stockholders, Owners of Land and Ready Money*, all of whom would be secured from being ruined; and all their sufferings will only amount to their denying themselves *some* gratifications in their *Dress* or their *Palate*; in return for which they will be *easier* in their *mind*, and *sleep the quieter*. Add to which, by my proposals, *only thousands* will be affected, but *millions and hundreds of thousands* will be benefited, and *all* will be *protected*. If however the *Public Creditors cannot be prevailed upon*, and Government through *tenderness* towards them forbears to *urge* them to contribute, the consequences will probably

probably be *fatal* to their Principal as well as Interest. Upon a commotion, it is easy to see which side the People will chuse. "An enraged People," said Sir John Barnard on a like occasion, "have seldom any regard to Public Credit or Public Faith." And enraged the People certainly will be, if they find that *Taxes increase*, and the means of paying them *vanish*. In the words of the same *able, honest Man* I can safely say, "That my turning my thoughts this way proceeds from a regard to the *general safety*, and that of the Public Creditors in particular, who have the closest interest in, and may be supposed to have a regard for, every thing that can contribute to the well-being of the present Government."

Do they not see that as the Debts of the Public *increase*, the Prices of Stocks *sink*? all which is owing to the encrease of the People's *apprehensions* of a National Bankruptcy. Lending your Money to New Loans creates (to the Individual) an encrease of annual income; and you are satisfied, thinking perhaps that will *always continue*. But let us suppose a man possessed of 10,000l. three per cent Saving 60l. per annum out of his 300l. paid him in dividends, he buys another 100l. Stock with his 60l. and adds 3l. to his annual income. How is he benefited thereby, if by the Government's necessity he finds the Stocks fall only one pound per cent. (as fall they must while Government continues to borrow)? For was he next year to sell his Stock, he would find his 10,000l. would sell but for 5,900l. (most probably *much less*) and this year it would have brought 6000l. he will therefore find he had better given Government the 60l. to prevent its

its being obliged to mortgage a *new Tax*, that *must* operate to injure the produce of the Taxes already mortgaged to him, to secure the interest of his former 10,000 l. This reasoning, I am convinced, will be more and more attended to every day. The Stocks must and will sink in their value in proportion as the Debt is encreased, and the Trade decreases. New causes arise every day, treading on the heels of each other, all tending to the wasting away the value of the Funds; and without some *such* expedients as I have pointed out, and they too very *suddenly* adopted, we shall be deprived of the *nerves* that *enable* us to contend for our *Independency*: for the tide of Commerce will have taken a new direction; the coin will ebb out by means of the paying and supporting armies in a Country, whose debts to their *new friends* will demand all they can procure; and while America is hostile, our money that goes over there *unavoidably* circulates only with them. When we have paid for what we want, we may take our leave of the coin: it is either immediately *bidden*, or returned to France, for implements of *offence*, or for other articles of European production. Had we not better then to recal our troops, and leave those People to their adopting such policy, as most *probably* will suit our interest more than even *holding them in subjection*, and thereby obliging us to keep a continual guard, not only *against them*, but against such Powers as they may disagree with concerning *boundaries* or *commerce*. Leave them *free* to trade where they will; and if our manufactures are *then in being*, there they will come, *without all their Treaties*. If France attempts to enforce trade, you will then have America on your side.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXII.

October 7, 1779.

THE *Post-horse* Tax, like all others lately imposed, having, by the accounts given in, fallen *short* of expectation, and *great Supplies* being wanted to answer the expences *even already incurred*; should it be judged expedient to lay a Tax upon Property in the most *direct manner*, and for the *gross sum* wanted, (which I again repeat would prevent the necessity of *further Taxes upon the Necessaries of Life*, and thereby remove the apprehension of driving the Manufacturers to take shelter under the protection of a Government *less burthensome*) a scale may be fixed something like the following, subject to variations according to circumstances, and to be determined before the Commissioners of the Land-Tax, *viz.*

Stockholders paying *voluntarily one per Cent.* out of their *Capital during the war only*, and covenanting that all other Property shall undergo a *similar Tax*; that is, one-hundredth part of its full value.

Freehold Land valued at twenty-five years purchase, would, in that case, pay five shillings in the pound; for twenty-five pounds being the value of one pound per annum, five shillings is the hundredth part of twenty-five pounds, which ought to be just a fourth part of the *net rent above the present Taxes*. Say that Copyholds are worth twenty years purchase; it will be found that four shillings in the pound upon the net rent is one hundredth of their value. Money

on Mortgage ought to pay one per Cent. Life Annuities, valued at *half a Freehold*, or $12\frac{1}{2}$ years, ought to pay two shillings and sixpence in the pound. *Sinecures* the same. Church-Livings to be considered as Life-Estates, and pay two shillings and six-pence; and for all places where duty is annexed, to be considered accordingly.

In cases of fines, and private or collusive agreements, in the first case one-hundredth part of the fine to go to Government; in the latter, nothing less than forfeiture of *three times* the Sum, and dissolution of the Covenants *in toto*.—The rents and profits might easily be known by the mode of Receipts upon Stamps, as I have before pointed out.

By *some such means* the whole sum wanted might be raised within the year; and to accommodate those who could not spare so large a part of their annual income, Government has only to allow its Receivers to take *Debenture Notes* * from the parties, chargeable upon *Specific Property*, to bear interest and be transferable; by which a new species of Paper would become current, no way detrimental to the Bank Paper, as the Bank itself might buy them in. However, it is supposed there would be no necessity for such Paper; as people, not having a market, as usually opened by Government by means of *new Loans*, would readily enough accept such securities as offered in the former way of Mortgage or Bond. By the Plans I have ventured

* Unquestionably identified, and which might prevent the expence of a person mortgaging for the payment of the Tax.

to recommend, foreigners would combine with natives in aid and support of the Government who they have trusted with their property. There would be no fear that the Landholders would *disburthen themselves violently* of the Debt they have contracted by their Representatives; as they must see and be convinced, that their Creditors have acted a judicious, liberal, and prudent part; first, in contributing towards their own security eventually; secondly, in covenanteeing to give in an *equal* proportion with other Property; and lastly, in assisting to remove the necessity there would otherwise be of taxing the sources from whence their interest and the Landholders rents must flow, and which to have encreased would have risked their whole Property.

I confess *such means* would soon make the people heartily *tired* of the present contest for *American Dominion*; it would contract our views likewise in all future wars, and make us well weigh the consequences of engaging in *any*. We should perhaps prefer *Security* to national *Glory*, and not be so likely to be blown up with high notions of our own importance and superiority: we should, however, be more strong *internally*; have indeed unconquerable powers *against invaders*; and consequently be *easier* in our minds, and *less feared*; but, nevertheless, always *respectable* as a great, independent People.

K. LETTER

L E T T E R XXIII.

October 19, 1779.

THE Islands of Great Britain and Ireland, populous, well-cultivated, and independent, enjoying a mild climate, numerous harbours and navigable rivers, all tending to promote Commerce, and having several staple commodities which will be ever in request, may always be respectable for power and riches, while we hold distant Possessions *proportioned* to the natural increase of the People, above which *imbecility* will attend *extension*, particularly if those separated parts be *extremely remote*, and so circumstanced as not to be able to assist each other, or do not, by the trade and consequent increase of revenue they produce, pay for the expence they occasion: and such, perhaps, have been the operating defects that have occasioned *our present Debt*, and our comparative *weakness at home*; while the Nations we now contend with are become *stronger*, and menace no less than conquest of a Power very lately their superior. Before we had Settlements in America, the Nation was able to carry its arms into the heart of France, and that even while Scotland was hostile, and Ireland did not afford any assistance. In the infancy of our Colonies, Britain and Ireland were able to send great armies to the assistance of their Allies on the Continent of Europe. Till we extended ourselves *beyond due bounds*, and by *the last glorious and successful war*, **FIXED** upon ourselves a *Debt* we shall never be able *fairly* to disburthen

disburthen ourselves of, we were *great* and *respectable*, and our friendship was *courted* and *sought after* *. Upon considering the reverse which we now experience, may we not phisically and fairly conclude, that our *acquisitions have not made returns equal to the expences they brought upon us* ? as even before the American war so little could be done towards reducing the National Debt; and yet it seemed a measure so necessary, that we risked the experiment to relieve ourselves by *taxing the Colonies*, the consequences of which no one yet knows the *full extent*. But we certainly now find the revenues go but a little way towards the annual expenditure; and what return are we to expect for the *further mortgage of our Property* ?

* The more than natural exertions in raising Supplies last War, produced the temporary effect the Conductor of it wished, and raised him to popularity; but the efforts he caused us to make, had the same effect that ebriety produces in the Natural Body. Under the first effects of liquor, the person can overcome the powers of men naturally stronger; but that over, he is left languid and spiritless: whereas *uniform and bounded measures in Government*, and temperate and moderate exertions of the bodily powers, always keep the constitution of both in vigour. Had we, in the last war, been merely on the defensive in America, and not sought after extent of territory, and had we acted offensively at sea only, we might have carried on the war without encreasing our Debt, and might have enriched our Country with Commerce and the Spoils of the Enemy, until we had worn-out their patience. But a war in the East and West Indies, *Germany, Portugal, and America*, was more than we could have continued to support; and on that account, notwithstanding all our successes, we actually sued for peace; whereas the *destruction of their Naval Force*, and the *entire loss of their Trade*, would have alone compelled them to relinquish their conquests, and ask peace of us.

The more likely to take place among to great a num-
ber

The House of Bourbon, that was reduced so low by the last war, has been rising during the peace, although she had been bereft of some *American Territory*; a circumstance worthy our particular attention, and which may serve to confirm what had been often said of *Canada*, that it was a perpetual drain upon *France*; and which may make us not over-fond of trying to do more than detach *America* from her new friends; and not only acknowledge her Independence, but maintain it, by entering into Treaties of Alliance, which might secure to us at the least our former Islands in the West-Indies, and an open Trade. Peace would soon bring their ships to our ports, and discord would assuredly take place between people nurtured under the wings of a free Government and the subjects of despots, as they profess principles of Religion and Politics diametrically opposite. With regard to our conduct towards *France* and *Spain*, let us but conciliate the affections of our Sister-Island, and we may set them at defiance. Our Fleet is strong enough to act by detachment offensively; and the Grand Fleet, without putting all to the risk by a battle with very superior numbers only to try their prowess, and without a greater object, is strong enough to make them dread the consequences of their ships of war putting to sea with a Fleet of Transports to make a descent. In such case, upon a coast hostile and well-prepared, the consequences of an adventurous and bold exertion of our naval force would very probably end in the destruction of numbers of their transports, and not unlikely many of their line-of-battle ships; for disorder and confusion would be more likely to take place among so great a number

ber as they must consist of, than among a smaller number, all fitted for offence, and whose business it would be to keep connected, and dash into the midst of their whole Fleet, knowing each individual ship equal to any one of the enemy. This is not, however, what is likely to happen; their object is of lesser magnitude, and in which the Powers of Europe will not interest themselves. *Minorca and Gibraltar may fall; but the consequences, so far from being hurtful, may be productive of a long series of peaceful years, and a saving to the Nation, without a diminution of our Trade.* At this time the rate of Assurance is *higher by far* than when France had Minorca; and so it will always be when we cannot have a Fleet in the Mediterranean; and even Gibraltar loses its use when *our Fleet is not superior,*

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

October 21, 1779.

TO the end that the war should be provided for *within the year*, and not as heretofore occasion an encrease of debt, and a future *disability* of resources; and at the same time to oblige people to feel the effects of war, so as not to beget an opinion that we are growing rich, while we are only *raising a bubble that must*, if encreased, finally *burst*, and become extinct (meaning the Government Funds); I have written several Letters shewing the *expediency, efficiency, and practicability*, as well as *equity* of taxing property *only*, in *whatever* shape it may appear; by which means the *Manufacturers, Husbandmen, and Labourers*, will be exempted from *further* burthens, and may with *spirit, industry, and bodily exertion*, both defend and support the State. I now *sum up all* by saying, that the most obvious means of Supplies in my poor opinion are what follows:

A contribution from the Creditors of Government, which being taken out of the Principal, will be *lightly felt*.

A Tax upon the *net* produce of land and employments, &c. &c. over and above the present Land-Tax, but proportioned *exactly* to the produce, so that people will pay up to 4s. in the old way, and above it in the new.

One per cent. upon money lent upon mortgage, which will make Land and the Stocks proportionally better than money on mortgage, and consequently operate to raise their value.

Two,

Two, three, four, or five shillings on *sinécures* of every kind.

A Tax to affect Patentees, who by monopoly hurt commerce.

A Tax on Protections from *personal* service to be so general, that all must act against the common enemy, or pay to recruiting, subsisting, and Military Pension Funds: Admiralty-protections to be accounted for with the Clerks, so that they have a reasonable equivalent.

The new Taxes will consequently end with the war, and the people in general be free from the fear of being subdued through want of resources; the thirst for conquest (which turned our heads last war) will be abated by reflecting on the expence; and we shall seek peace from prudence rather than inability, or want of vigour and spirit to defend ourselves.

of some more of our power compared with that of the difficulty of our force compared with that of France, Spain, and America united; what is it better than medals to possess, especially as there can be no doubt but that the Court of Peterburgh, Berlin, and Denmark, as well as the United Provinces, will lend their aid to bring on a Treaty, whereby our interests will be attended to and better supported now than after a year or two more, when we may be much lower than at the present; it is not by loss of Territory, yet most certainly by the accumulation of the National Debt. There are none excepting Jews, Corn-Law Commissioners, Bankers, and Stock-Exchange, and I think I do. I see then the I and others look to themselves, and instruct their Representatives; and let the Creditors of Government likewise consider how their property will fall in value by a continuance of this un-
equal

L E T T E R XXV.

October 30, 1779.

IT will be easy to prove to demonstration, that hardly any offer of Peace can be so ruinous in the acceptance, as a longer continuance of the war. While we are looking back with horror on the heavy load of debt we have already contracted, and forward with the greatest possible degree of apprehension of the consequences that too plainly is foreseen of further debts, and have in view no *attainable object* to compensate for a further mortgage of our property, but, on the contrary, a prospect of an almost inevitable loss of some more of our present possessions (from the disparity of our force compared with that of France, Spain, and America united); what is it better than madness to persist, especially as there can be no doubt but that the Courts of Petersburg, Berlin, and Denmark, as well as the United Provinces, will lend their aid to bring on a Treaty, whereby our interest will be attended to and better supported now, than after a year or two more, when we may be sunk lower than at the present, if not by loss of Territory, yet most certainly by the accumulation of the National Debt. There are none excepting *Agents, Contractors, Commissaries, Jews, and Stock-Brokers*, but what speak and think as I do. Let then the Landholders look to themselves, and instruct their Representatives; and let the Creditors of Government likewise consider how their property will fall in value by a continuance of this unequal

equal war. It is upon Property only that all the weight must eventually fall ; and the utmost care must be taken not to proceed beyond a certain line in Taxation of the necessities of life. Perhaps we are *arrived* at the point beyond which we *ought* not to proceed ; and if so, the call upon the Property must be in a *direct manner*. Beware then that you be not like the deaf adder ; listen in time, or an enraged populace will probably give *their fiat* to the Stocks and to Taxes, and avenge themselves of your *inconsiderate, unfeeling, and unwise conduct*, in trying to narrow their already *scanty* means of subsistence.

L E T T E R XXVI.

November 11, 1779.

OUR present situation with regard to Ireland, demands the closest attention of every thinking individual in both Islands ; and the more so, from our situation with regard to other countries. There will not be wanting many who will blame Ireland for taking the advantage of the times, to obtain from us, in the *perplexities wherein we are involved*, what, at another time, we might dispute with the greater likelihood of *evading*. But if they are determined to keep *within the line of moderation* (provided we do not irritate them, by with-holding what *we ought in JUSTICE to grant*), I do not see they are to be

condemned for *asking for redress*, when they may have the power to urge their arguments with the *voice of thousands arrayed in arms*.

So far the conduct of the Irish has been such as all men will allow is perfectly consistent with *prudent regard to their interest*; and they are now arrived to that line, beyond which, if *unjustifiable conduct* in us obliges them to proceed, the consequences may, in all likelihood, be *fatal to both*. During this *awful pause*, let them reflect, separated from this Country, what would be the situation of theirs? How would they maintain their Independence without a Navy? Soil, state of Cultivation, Extent, Numbers and Situation (with regard to the Continent of Europe) being all in our favour; whatever may be the *first effects* of their detaching themselves, those would all tend *eventually* to give us the advantage over them, both in peace and war; and therefore, excepting they would prefer being subordinate to a Continental Power, it can only be, by being united to us they can ever fully enjoy the blessings of peace, and the fruits arising from a *well-regulated commerce*; and this they have a right to demand. But as things now stand, that is, under the *protection of the Navy provided for by the Parliament of Great-Britain*, they enjoy the benefit of trade to foreign parts, and are guarded against *invasions*; and as a great part of the provisions for our ships, our fishery,

I do not mean such an Union as would blend their Parliament with ours; but such as would preserve the unity of the Monarchy; and leave each Country free to regulate their own commerce, making stipulations with each other upon *reciprocal grounds* of advantage, such as commercial people are ever making in private concerns, and solemnly engaging to furnish aids towards the support of the executive Power in every eventual exigency.

and

and for the West-India Islands, are purchased in Ireland, it is but reasonable to ask, what part of the expence attending the fitting out, victualling, and manning our Fleet, they are *willing* to pay? for as matters are now ordered (if I apprehend rightly), it will fall eventually *wholly upon us*; our debts encreasing in a *ten-fold* proportion to theirs. We are threatened with an encrease of Land-tax, and the Farmers are breaking from high-rents and confined exportation; so that the rents *must be* lowered, although Taxes accumulate. Is this then a time to demand a *free Trade*, without, at the same time, holding out something to *alleviate the blow* which such a measure must give our Manufacturers? I am confident the *Irish are too just and generous* a people, to either expect or desire so great a concession, without an equivalent on their part. Let us but shew a hearty disposition to grant them every reasonable encouragement, their resentments will cool, and they will shew themselves men of liberal sentiments, and will glow with the true and genuine warmth for the interests of their Sister State. A Committee from the Irish Parliameht might, upon a conference with a Committee of ours, devise some equitable means of adjusting differences, and providing for the *general safety*. Let not the subordination of the Irish Parliament be *mentioned* or be hinted at; let it not become a question; it is too *proud* a distinction to *claim*, and too *humiliating* for them to acknowledge. Situate as this Country is in all respects, it is really *superior in effect*; but let us be content with the knowing it, without proclaiming it to excite envy and heart-burnings, when *both Countries ought to be the most firmly united*.

The

The *bulk* of the *People* of this Country would not be benefited by the most abject humiliation of Ireland. The *King* would have no *greater* power than that Kingdom *willingly acknowledges him* now to have; and all the difference would be, that a *bad* Minister would have it more in his power to reward the Majority in Parliament here by sinecures and impositions upon Ireland, so as to bribe them to sanctify all his measures, were they ever so *unwise, unjust, wild, or extravagant.*

Allow but Ireland to enjoy *equal liberty with ourselves*, we need never fear but that she will make a common cause with us whenever we are attacked; for she will plainly see, that to preserve *her* liberty, she must interest herself in *ours*; as whatever Power should *prevail* against us, would, soon after, reduce her: and, separated from us, she would require a greater force to put her upon *any thing like a* RESPECTABLE *footing*, than she need be at the expence of, when united with us under one Monarch,

them, and will glow with the true and genuine
 warmth for the interests of their sister State. A
 Committee from the Irish Parliament might
 upon a conference with a Committee of ours
 devise some equitable means of adjusting dif-
 ferences, and providing for the general safety.
 Let not the indignation of the Irish Parliament
 be hurried or be piqued at; let it not become a
 question; it is too good a distinction to claim,
 and too promising for them to acknowledge.
 Since as this Country is in all respects, it is
 really superior in effect, but let us be content
 with the knowing it, without proclaiming it to
 excite envy and heart-burnings, when each Coun-

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LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

November 20, 1779.

LIVES there a man in his Majesty's Dominions, that does not see that this Kingdom requires immediate relief from the various disorders that attend its Political State? Who does not see that the *wire has been drawn too fine*, and that we had extended ourselves beyond the line of discretion? Is it not discoverable to all, that the returns from our acquisitions of last war, have never answered the expence attending their Civil and Military Establishments; and from that cause, with others co-operating, very little could be done in the time of the most profound Peace, *towards disburthening* ourselves of the National Debt? Have we not, with all our successes and acquisitions of former wars, been continually *mortgaging our Property here*, to obtain an Ideal Property in a Country which may never again acknowledge our superiority? Would we not account an individual a *proper subject for Bedlam*, who would alienate his Property in Freehold Land, to purchase Quit-Rents in a distant Country, the title to which was litigated, and where the people did not acknowledge the jurisdiction of our Courts? Is not this Nation now in that state with respect to America? Will it not always be the interest of France, Spain, and America, to act in concert until they have each attained the object of their several pursuits? and would it not therefore be better to look upon America as *no longer under Parliamentary controul*?

Will Minorca ever be of the least use to us while our Fleet is inferior, especially as it is *acknowledged* we did not feel the want of it last war? Nay, is Gibraltar itself *now* of any use to us? Will the holding of them both give us equal advantage of the Levant Trade with France, who has several Ports in the Mediterranean? Are we not *forcing Nature* in endeavouring to rival them in that Trade? and are there not many Neutral Ports in the Mediterranean, to which we may always carry our fish, &c.? Do not *all* other Maritime Powers trade in that sea without having a Port of their own?

As a long Peace has not enabled us to lessen our Debt, is it not (as I have before said) reasonable to suppose, several of our possessions are rather burthensome than beneficial? Will not France and Spain always aim at dislodging us from places so circumstanced as those I have mentioned? To obtain and *preserve* Peace, or maintain the War, ought we not to listen to the *demands of Ireland* with the most perfect attention, and shew the most hearty desire to give her ample proof of our inclination to redress *all* her grievances?

Who will say we ought not to promote a combination of interests with *America*? and to do which, what lengths ought we not to go to regain their affection, before the *entire extinction of our Manufacturing Bodies*?

The Writer of this, from observations made upon the spot, asserts, that neither Canada or Nova Scotia will ever make returns answerable to the Civil and Military Establishments that will be necessary, if the other Provinces continue *hostile*. Besides, the one is shut up from you half the

the year, and the other, although seemingly so well situate for the fishery, that branch of commerce has never yet come there to any height, owing to the dearness of provisions, which is occasioned by the sea-coast being *unfertile*, and the parts that are otherwise being *so remote*. Interested people may *probably* maintain the contrary; all the Establishment of the Province will, *perhaps*, deny what is thus asserted (look for their motives among the Grants for its support since the year 1749) *; it is nevertheless so; and as the Isle of Sable Bank is not looked upon as near so plentiful of fish, as the Grand Bank of Newfoundland, we must always find greater advantage by the latter than the former, it being so much *nearer home*, and the vessels being all victualled *from Ireland*, and fitted out *from home*. Add to which, those *unprofitable Possessions* must ever occasion contention about limits, in which the Americans, if they are separated from us, must have the advantage still more and more, whereas no such disputes can arise concerning an Island such as Newfoundland.

In order to cultivate a perfect and lasting *Friendship and Alliance with America*, and to form a *Natural Balance* to the *Family Compact*, regain the *affections of America* at any rate, promote her becoming a *Maritime Power*, and she will see it her *Interest* to throw her weight into *our scale*. Draw out the *Tborn* from the side of Spain by giving her *Gibraltar and Minorca* for an *equivalent*;

* The first seven years, *exclusive* of the military establishment, being 405,486l.: yet the Colony *languished* until the war brought out a vast force, and caused a fresh circulation of money.

drop that *vain, unsubstantial, UNACKNOWLEDGED,* and therefore *ridiculous* title your K—— assumes, and the French *may be satisfied*; if not, you will gain Allies, and have only them to contend with. America regarding us as *their Natural Allies*, and seeing us so *heartily* disposed to remove *every stumbling-block*, will readily return to their old Markets, if our Manufactories are not all broke up; and being nurtured under a *limited Monarchy*, may perhaps *ask for a Prince of the Family on the Throne of Britain*, as a *Viceroy* or Deputy of the Sovereign, by which they will unite their interests more strongly with ours, and *repress* the perhaps too *aspiring hopes* of some of their Leaders, who otherwise may involve them in confusion. Thus all jarring interests may be reconciled—a *firm Family Compact* established—and their principal men may be gratified according to their several pretensions to rank and precedence; each Country would contain within itself a *complete Legislature*; and leaning towards each other, like the rafters of a building, afford a mutual support, and form a well-connected edifice, *internally distinct*, and *outwardly beautiful, uniform, strong, and harmonious in its proportions*, under one comprehensive roof, with one general name, *The British Empire*. To a liberal mind, a Native of North-America and one born in the *heart* of the Metropolis have equal natural rights; so a Native Briton, or a North-American, ought to be perfectly equal. The bright day of British Glory shutting in with a violent storm, the careful Pilot must shorten sail to secure the masts, by which means the vessel may weather the dangers that seem to threaten her, and be in a condition to take the advantage of the next propitious gale. On the contrary, if
we

we do not reef our sails, and strike our *Top Gallant*, we may lose our lower masts, and the Vessel of State become an *inactive bulk*, the sport of the waves, or the prey to the enemy.

LETTER XXVIII.

[A greater Naval Force seeming necessary to allay People's fears of an Invasion, the following was sent by the Author to the EARL of SANDWICH the 10th of July last.]

PROPOSAL for a NAVAL MILITIA.

TO consist of Volunteers who have been at sea, but for various reasons may have adopted another plan of life, yet might not be against serving for a limited time upon our own Coasts. To be formed into Companies, consisting of a Lieutenant, two Midshipmen, one Boatswain, Mate, and 70 Privates, with a Captain to every five Companies.

To be employed only in case of a threatened invasion; in which case, to be embarked on board such ships as may be fitted only for Channel service. Many such being in their bottoms found, might be kept ready at Spithead, fitted with masts, &c. one degree *below* their rate, and having good ground-tackling, would afford an excellent *corps de reserve*. The Proposer has himself been many years at sea, has been twice *dismasted*, and has experienced that our ships of war often sail better with lesser masts than are usually fitted to them; they are easier worked, and

and more manageable when *under-masted*; and for defensive service, are fully as serviceable as those with their proper size according to the establishment. Add to which, this Plan will suit *old* ships, as they will not strain so much in bad weather.

The Officers to have only temporary rank and pay. The men to have conduct-money allowed, and to be assured of being kept upon Home-service. Their families to be provided for, in case of being wounded or slain.

The above description would, it is supposed, take in a large number of men and ships, which would not be otherwise employed in our defence.

It might be required to have a small number of seamen kept constantly on board the above ships, to shew the new men the mode of working them; and they might be variously useful as receptacles for other ships companies while docking, &c. &c.

P. S. Men might be had to serve a temporary occasion, from an embargo, and a *cessation* of all inland navigation; the Justices furnishing horses, and even carriages, to convey the people (who had previously engaged to serve) to the Port where their ship lay ready.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXIX.

November 27, 1779.

WITH all possible respect to the sentiments of more experienced Men, the Author of the foregoing Letters presumes to offer it as his opinion, that we have *probably* been in an error in dropping such Ships of the Line as were those of last war carrying 68 guns with 520 men, such as the *Lancaster*, *Orford*, and *Northumberland*, and substituting so many of 74 guns; as comparatively, and in a *national scale*, the former were perhaps better. They required 80 men less; drew less water; carried their ports *as well*; stowed a *greater* quantity of provisions in proportion to their complement; were in *less danger* from taking the ground, being flatter floored, and for the same reason could approach the shore nearer to cover the landing of men or to attack batteries; were what the Seamen call better Sea-boats; required *less* expensive rigging and masts, and are not apt to be injured *so much in either*, both from their construction, and their comparative lightness. They are more manageable (as the human powers, by numbers being added, cannot be brought to act with *proportionable* effect upon such masts, yards, cables, &c. as are *extremely* large). They are more easily docked and hove down, and are in less danger in shoal water, which may be made appear by the loss of the *Invincible* and *Mars*, last war. They being what the Seamen call long-legged, sharp ships, and drawing more water, were lost, where ships of the old construction

construction would have sailed in safety; add to which, in a high sea they sail better. The reasons, it is supposed, why the larger ships have obtained, are, that they are certainly more respectable from carrying more men and guns, and sailing better in *smooth water*; and when upon a wind, are (in weather when they can carry sail) more *weatherly*. All which is granted; but *numbers* being wanted to protect numerous Islands, &c. and as the expence in the various articles of rigging, timber, &c. being perhaps one-third more from their being all in the *extreme*, and indeed *hardly to be procured*, it is but reasonable to start the question, Whether the small deficiency of guns might not be compensated by the advantages before-mentioned? And as what is advanced of the superior quality of our old 70 gun ships coincides with the opinion of one of our *most favourite* Admirals, perhaps the sooner we return to the former Plan, the better; for we could in that case send *more* ships of the line to sea at the same expence we are now at, and without requiring a greater number of seamen.

THE END.

E R R A T A.

Page 49, for *May 25th*, read *August 5th*.



